



**M** MANCHESTER  
MARATHON

# ADIDAS MANCHESTER MARATHON



# TRAINING GUIDE

NOVICE



# WELCOME TO ADIDAS RUNNERS

We are an international community of runners. A movement of changemakers spanning all skill levels and backgrounds, where every pace has a place. We are united in the ambition to become better athletes and allies through the power of sports, friendship and commitment, always resulting in personal growth and change.

We aspire to ensure that our community members feel safe, accepted, and inspired to be their best selves, whilst recognising that not all of our community members have the same privileges.

We are excited to have you with us as you prepare for the adidas Manchester Marathon 2025. The following pages will guide you to get out there and provide you an overview on how to train effectively for the Manchester Marathon. Wherever you are.

Our training plans have been designed to train any runner for a marathon, ranging from those planning to run their first marathon **NOVICE**, to those who

have completed a marathon before **INTERMEDIATE** to those looking to achieve a competitive-standard time for their age-group **ADVANCED**

Please note these plans are generalised and it may need to be adjusted based on your individual fitness level, goals, and other factors. It's always a good idea to consult with an adidas runners captain/coach for personalised advice/feedback.

## AYO DADA

Ayo is a qualified England Athletics senior coach, adidas runners London head coach, and a 2:39 marathon runner with over a decade of experience in races from 5km to ultra marathons. As a coach, Ayo focuses on helping athletes develop a healthy and holistic approach to training, particularly for the marathon distance.



# LEVEL BREAKDOWN

## NOVICE

### AIMING FOR COMPLETION OR 4 TO 6 HOURS

6:00 MIN/KM PACE

If this is your first marathon, this plan will help you build the endurance to complete the distance. The plan includes running 2-3 times per week. During the peak training phase, you will be running 40 to 55 km per week. The focus is on gradually increasing your mileage while allowing ample recovery time between runs.

## INTERMEDIATE

### AIMING FOR 3:30 TO 4 HOURS

5:00-5:25 MIN/KM PACE

This intermediate plan is for runners who have completed at least one marathon and are looking to improve their finish time. It requires 4 runs per week, progressively increasing in both duration and intensity. At the peak of the training cycle, you will be running 60 to 80 km per week, incorporating a mix of steady-state runs and more challenging sessions.

## ADVANCED

### AIMING FOR SUB-3:00 TO 3:30 HOURS

4:15 MIN/KM PACE

The advanced plan is designed for experienced marathoners aiming to achieve a more competitive time, possibly targeting age-group qualifications. This plan involves 5 runs per week, blending steady runs with more complex workouts such as tempo runs and interval training. At peak training, you will be running 70 to 100 km per week, focusing on building speed and endurance.



# TRAINING PHASES

## BASE-BUILDING PHASE

This is the foundational phase of the plan, where the primary goal is to develop an aerobic base and prepare the body for the demands of increased running volume. During this phase, we focus on building endurance through low- to moderate-intensity running. The strength and conditioning work completed here will enhance muscular strength and support the body's ability to handle the higher mileage in later phases.

## TRANSITION PHASE

The transition phase bridges the base-building phase and the more race-specific work to come. The aim here is to build on the aerobic fitness developed earlier, while gradually introducing workouts that enhance strength and speed. This phase prepares the body for the more intense demands of race-specific training.

## RACE-SPECIFIC PHASE

During this phase, we begin to focus on workouts that closely simulate the demands of marathon racing, particularly honing in on your target marathon pace. Training will become more intense, but it's crucial not to overcompensate for missed workouts or mileage from earlier phases. The goal is to fine-tune your fitness without overtraining.

## TAPER PHASE

The taper is just as critical as the training itself. During this period, we reduce training volume to allow the body to recover and rebuild, ensuring you arrive at race day in peak condition. The focus here is on conserving energy, so the reduction in mileage should be gradual, helping you feel fresh and strong for the race.

# HOW SHOULD EACH RUN FEEL?

There are several types of effort that you should aim to master as part of your training. One effective way to gauge your effort is through perceived exertion. This can also be linked to your heart rate. Below is a breakdown of different effort levels, based on perceived exertion and corresponding heart rate zones:

## **4-5/10 EFFORT OR 50-60% OF MAX HEART RATE**

This corresponds to easy/recovery running. The goal is to feel better by the end, promoting circulation, staying within the aerobic zone (using oxygen for energy), and being able to comfortably hold a conversation.

**TALK TEST:** You are relaxed, in control, and able to speak in complete sentences.

## **6/10 EFFORT OR 60% OF MAX HEART RATE**

This represents steady running, which is likely your average pace for most runs. It remains aerobic but slightly more demanding than recovery running.

**TALK TEST:** You can speak in short sentences, but with brief pauses.

## **7-8/10 EFFORT OR 70-80% OF MAX HEART RATE**

This is close to your marathon pace, assuming proper training and realistic pacing. This effort is still aerobic, but you must focus to maintain it without slowing down. It is important to practice this pace during long runs, with segments gradually increasing in duration as race day approaches.

**TALK TEST:** You experience controlled discomfort and can only speak 4-5 words when prompted.

## **8-8.5/10 EFFORT OR 80-85% OF MAX HEART RATE**

This is referred to as tempo running and is critical for improving your running economy and developing your aerobic base. The effort feels hard but manageable if you stay focused, hence the term “comfortably hard.”

**TALK TEST:** You can speak 1-2 words, but engaging in conversation is difficult.

## **8.5/10 AND HIGHER OR 85% AND ABOVE MAX HEART RATE**

This typically occurs during interval training. At this effort, you are working anaerobically, meaning your body relies on energy sources that don't require oxygen.

**TALK TEST:** You won't be able to hold a conversation and will likely respond with short sounds or grunts.

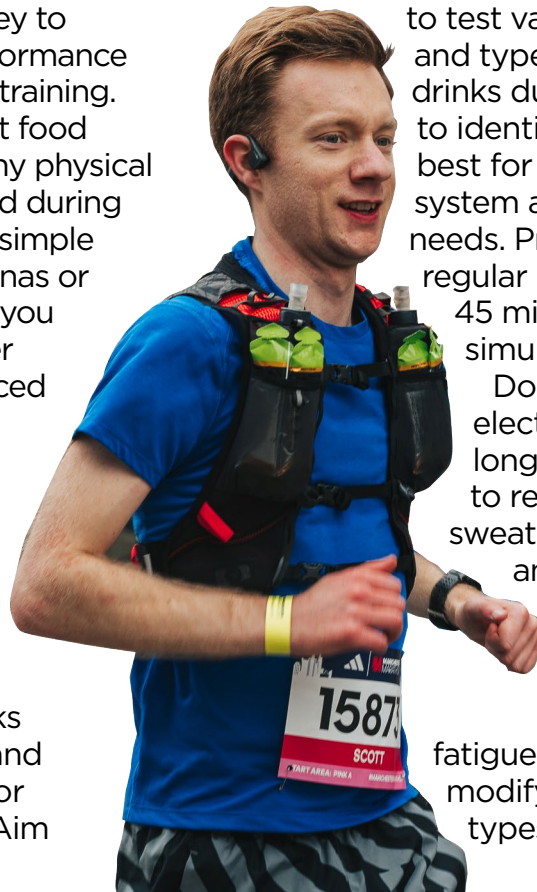


# NUTRITION



Healthy nutrition is key to support optimal performance pre, during and post training. Please have sufficient food before completing any physical activity. Stay hydrated during your run and opt for simple carbohydrates (bananas or dried fruit) to power you through the run. After your run, eat a balanced meal of complex carbohydrates, protein, and fat.

As you progress in your training, start to introduce supplementary fuel in the form of gels and sports drinks to aid your training and prepare your body for race-day demands. Aim



to test various brands and types of gels and drinks during long runs to identify what works best for your digestive system and energy needs. Practice consuming them at regular intervals, such as every 30-45 minutes, during your runs to simulate race conditions.

Don't forget to consider your electrolyte intake, especially on longer runs or in warmer weather, to replenish nutrients lost through sweat. This will help prevent cramps and maintain energy levels.

Lastly, listen to your body and adjust your nutrition strategy as needed. If you experience discomfort or fatigue, assess whether you need to modify portion sizes, timing, or the types of fuel you're using.

## RECOVERY

Remember, this guide is a flexible framework, not a one-size-fits-all solution. Feel free to adjust the schedule to suit your needs whether that means swapping days, taking extra rest due to tiredness, fatigue, or injury, or adapting sessions to your fitness level. Listening to your body is crucial for long-term progress.

Please consult a physiotherapist or medical professional if you encounter a running-related injury.

To prevent injuries and support

recovery, spend at least 15 minutes warming up before each session and recovering afterward. A proper warm-up should include dynamic stretches and light movements to prepare your muscles and joints for activity. After your run, focus on recovery stretching to improve flexibility and reduce muscle tension.

Incorporate foam rolling into your routine to relieve tightness, enhance circulation, and aid muscle recovery. Spend 5-10 minutes targeting key areas such as your calves, quads, hamstrings, and glutes.



# GLOSSARY OF SESSIONS

## **STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING**

Running-specific strength and conditioning workout emphasising exercises that strengthen the key muscle groups, core and abdominals/hamstrings/quads/calves. Incorporate common moves such as a squat, lunge, Russian deadlift, suitcase hold, calf raises, or split squat. Also explosive exercises such as a medicine ball slam and kettlebell swing. You may also include yoga/Pilates as part of this segment. Find the adidas video examples below.

VIDEO EXAMPLE ONE  
VIDEO EXAMPLE TWO  
VIDEO EXAMPLE THREE

## **CROSS TRAINING**

These are aerobic workouts without the stress of running, this could be swimming or cycling.

## **TEMPO RUNS**

These runs are not designed to run at flat out but running on edge of your comfort zone. You'll be working on improving your aerobic capacity and lactate threshold Remember you're running to feel rather than to pace.

## **STEADY RUNS**

These are slightly harder than an easy run but should still feel comfortable, controlled and conversational. These runs are designed to raise your lactate threshold and improve your running economy.

## **LONG RUNS**

Long runs are the bread and butter of distance running, in the early weeks we should concentrate on increasing time spent on feet rather than distance. Start off in earlier weeks by running at conversational pace then gradually build up to experimenting with marathon paces. These runs prepare us physically and mentally for the challenge to come. Talk test - Running at a conversational level but feel slightly red-faced with increase of muscular fatigue

## **EASY RUNS**

These should be very easy and relaxed - ideally you should be able to hold a conversation during the run.

## **REST/RECOVERY**

These days are primarily to rest and recover. Take time off running to allow the body time to repair and recover between workouts. Listen to your body and take notice of any warning signs.

## **CRUISE INTERVALS**

You'll be running at a comfortably hard pace followed by an essential recovery period and the focus is on cruising rather than pushing hard.

## **WARM-UP**

Before jumping into any run, it's essential to warm up properly. Warming up prepares your muscles, improves circulation, and reduces the risk of injury. More info [HERE](#)



# EVENT DAY PACING STRATEGY

## NOVICE

### AIMING FOR 4 TO 6 HOURS ~ 6:00 MIN/KM PACE

**START COMFORTABLE:** Begin the event at an easy, conversational pace for the first 10 km (e.g., 6:30 - 6:45 min/km). Resist the urge to go faster, even if you feel great.

**SETTLE INTO A RHYTHM:** From 10–30 km, aim for your target pace (around 6:00–6:15 min/km). Stay relaxed and focused, breaking the race into smaller mental segments.

**FINISH STRONG:** In the final 10–12 km, adjust your effort if you feel strong, but avoid overexerting too early. Prioritise consistency to complete the event comfortably.

## INTERMEDIATE

### AIMING FOR 3:30 TO 4 HOURS ~ 5:00-5:25 MIN/KM PACE

**CONTROLLED START:** Begin 5–10 seconds slower than your target marathon pace (e.g., 5:25–5:30 min/km) for the first 5–8 km to conserve energy.

**MAINTAIN MARATHON PACE:** From 8–32 km, lock into your target pace (5:00–5:25 min/km). Focus on even effort and stay disciplined, even if others are speeding up.

**PUSH IN THE FINAL 10K:** If you feel strong, aim to slightly increase your pace in the last 10 km. Stay relaxed and focus on good form to finish efficiently.

## ADVANCED

### AIMING FOR SUB-3:00 TO 3:30 HOURS ~ 4:15 MIN/KM PACE

**NEGATIVE SPLIT APPROACH:** Start 5–10 seconds slower than your target pace (e.g., 4:25–4:30 min/km) for the first 5 km to avoid burning out.

**HOLD TARGET PACE:** Maintain marathon pace (4:15–4:30 min/km) consistently from 5–32 km. Use aid stations for quick refuelling without losing too much momentum.

**RACE THE FINAL 10K:** If you've conserved energy, aim to gradually pick up the pace in the final 10 km. Push to hold steady or accelerate slightly in the last 5 km, depending on how you feel.

## MASTERING MARATHON DAY: EVENT DAY TIPS

### STICK TO THE PLAN

It's easy to get carried away by adrenaline or other runners' pace. Stay disciplined.

### PRACTICE HYDRATION & NUTRITION

Consume fluids and carbohydrates regularly on event day to maintain energy levels.

### MENTAL STRATEGIES

Break the event into segments (e.g., 5km or 10km blocks) to stay focused and motivated.

### ADJUST FOR CONDITIONS

On hot or windy days, adjust your pace slightly to avoid burnout.

### USE NEGATIVE SPLITS

Starting slower and finishing stronger ensures you have energy when it matters most.



# TRAINING PLAN



## 16 WEEK NOVICE

### PHASE ONE BASE

| WEEK                           | MON                    | TUE                        | WED                | THUR   | FRI                | SAT   | SUN                |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|--|--------------------|---|--------------------|
| <b>1</b><br>W/C<br>6th<br>JAN  | 30 minutes<br>easy run | Strength &<br>conditioning | Rest &<br>Recovery | 20 minutes<br>tempo<br>= 1 minute at<br>tempo pace/<br>1 minute at<br>easy pace  | Rest &<br>Recovery | 70 minutes<br>easy run<br>+<br>Strength &<br>conditioning               | Rest &<br>Recovery |
| <b>2</b><br>W/C<br>13th<br>JAN | 30 minutes<br>easy run | Strength &<br>conditioning | Rest &<br>Recovery | 24 minutes<br>tempo<br>= 1 minute at<br>tempo pace/<br>1 minutes at<br>easy pace | Rest &<br>Recovery | 1 hour<br>30 minutes<br>easy run<br>+<br>Strength &<br>conditioning     | Rest &<br>Recovery |
| <b>3</b><br>W/C<br>20th<br>JAN | 30 minutes<br>easy run | Strength &<br>conditioning | Rest &<br>Recovery | 26 minutes<br>tempo<br>= 1 minute at<br>tempo pace/<br>1 minute at<br>easy pace  | Rest &<br>Recovery | 1 hour and<br>50 minutes<br>easy run<br>+<br>Strength &<br>conditioning | Rest &<br>Recovery |
| <b>4</b><br>W/C<br>27th<br>JAN | 30 minutes<br>easy run | Strength &<br>conditioning | Rest &<br>Recovery | 20 mins tempo<br>= 1 minute at<br>tempo pace/<br>1 minute at<br>easy pace        | Rest &<br>Recovery | 1 hour and<br>40 minutes<br>easy run<br>+<br>Strength &<br>conditioning | Rest &<br>Recovery |

### PHASE TWO TRANSITION

| WEEK                           | MON                      | TUE                        | WED                | THUR   | FRI                | SAT   | SUN  |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|--|--------------------|---|--|
| <b>5</b><br>W/C<br>3rd<br>FEB  | 40 minutes<br>steady run | Strength &<br>conditioning | Rest &<br>Recovery | 30 minutes<br>tempo =<br>10 minutes easy<br>pace, 10 minutes<br>tempo pace, 5<br>minutes easy<br>pace, 5 minutes<br>tempo pace<br>+<br>Strength &<br>Conditioning  | Rest &<br>Recovery | 2 hours run<br>1 hour easy,<br>1 hour steady                                    | Rest &<br>Recovery<br>or<br>45 minutes<br>cross-training |
| <b>6</b><br>W/C<br>10th<br>FEB | 50 minutes<br>steady run | Strength &<br>conditioning | Rest &<br>Recovery | 35 minutes<br>tempo =<br>10 minutes easy<br>pace, 10 minutes<br>tempo pace, 10<br>minutes easy<br>pace, 5 minutes<br>tempo pace<br>+<br>Strength &<br>Conditioning | Rest &<br>Recovery | 2 hours 20<br>minutes run<br>1 hour easy,<br>1 hour steady,<br>20 mins<br>tempo | Rest &<br>Recovery<br>or<br>45 minutes<br>cross-training |



## PHASE THREE RACE SPECIFIC

| WEEK                            | MON   | TUE                     | WED             | THUR  | FRI             | SAT  | SUN  |
|---------------------------------|---|-------------------------|-----------------|---|-----------------|--|--|
| <b>7</b><br>W/C<br>17th<br>FEB  | 60 minutes easy run   | Strength & conditioning | Rest & Recovery | 35 minutes = Progression.<br>10 minutes easy<br>+ 10 minutes steady<br>+ 15 minutes tempo   | Rest & Recovery | 2 hours 40 minutes long easy run   | Rest & Recovery<br>or<br>45 minutes cross-training |
| <b>8</b><br>W/C<br>24th<br>FEB  | 30 minutes easy run +<br>10 x 1 minute at 8/10 effort<br>with 90s jog recovery<br>(after each 1 minute run)                     | Strength & conditioning | Rest & Recovery | 35 minutes using Hills =<br>15 minutes easy pace,<br>10 x 1 minute @ 7/10 uphill<br>effort with jog back down<br>recovery, 10 minutes easy pace | Rest & Recovery | 2 hours 50 minutes long run<br>incl. 7,6,5,4,3,2,1 min progression<br>(all 2 minutes jog recovery)<br>Starting @ target MP<br>(Marathon pace) and getting faster<br>throughout | Rest & Recovery<br>or<br>45 minutes cross-training |
| <b>9</b><br>W/C<br>3rd<br>MAR   | 20 minutes easy run +<br>Surges 20 minutes<br>(5 Blocks)<br>3 minutes @ 6/10 effort<br>1 minute @ 8/10 effort<br>(not a sprint) | Strength & conditioning | Rest & Recovery | 30 minutes tempo =<br>5 minutes easy pace,<br>15 minutes tempo pace,<br>5 minutes easy pace, 5 minutes tempo pace                               | Rest & Recovery | 2 hours 30 minutes run<br>2 hours easy, 30 minutes @ target MP   | Rest & Recovery<br>or<br>45 minutes cross-training |
| <b>10</b><br>W/C<br>10th<br>MAR | 30 minutes easy run +<br>10 x 1 minute at 8/10 effort<br>with 90s jog recovery<br>(after each 1 minute run)                     | Strength & conditioning | Rest & Recovery | 45 minutes tempo progression:<br>10 minutes easy pace,<br>10 minutes steady, 25 minutes @ MP  | Rest & Recovery | 27km long easy run incl.<br>1 x 15 minutes @ target MP<br>1 x 10 minutes @ slightly faster than MP<br>1 x 15 minutes @ target MP<br>(5 minutes jog recovery in between)        | Rest & Recovery<br>or<br>60 minutes cross-training |
| <b>11</b><br>W/C<br>17th<br>MAR | 20 minutes easy run +<br>Surges 20 minutes<br>(5 Blocks)<br>3 minutes @ 6/10 effort<br>1 minute @ 8/10 effort<br>(not a sprint) | Strength & conditioning | Rest & Recovery | 60 mins Cruise<br>Intervals:<br>10 minutes easy + 6 x 1k at MP with<br>90 sec jog recovery inbetween<br>+ 10 minutes easy                       | Rest & Recovery | 29km long easy run incl.<br>20 x 1 minute over/under target MP<br>(look to alternate between 10 seconds faster, followed by 10 seconds slower than target MP)                  | Rest & Recovery<br>or<br>60 minutes cross-training |



## PHASE THREE RACE SPECIFIC (continued)

| WEEK                            | MON  | TUE  | WED             | THUR  | FRI             | SAT  | SUN  |
|---------------------------------|--|--|-----------------|---|-----------------|--|--|
| <b>12</b><br>W/C<br>24th<br>MAR | 30 minutes easy run + 5 x 2 minutes at 8/10 effort with 90s jog recovery (after each 2 minute run)               | Strength & conditioning                      | Rest & Recovery | 26 minutes tempo = 1 minute at MP / 1 minute at easy pace   | Rest & Recovery | 30km run 20km @ steady, 5km @ target MP, 5km @ tempo                                     | Rest & Recovery or 60 minutes cross-training |
| <b>13</b><br>W/C<br>31st<br>MAR | 20 minutes easy run + Surges 20 minutes (5 Blocks) 3 minutes @ 6/10 effort 1 minute @ 8/10 effort (not a sprint) | Strength & conditioning                      | Rest & Recovery | 35 minutes using Hills = 15 minutes easy pace, 10 x 1 minute @ 7/10 uphill effort with jog back down recovery, 10 minutes easy pace | Rest & Recovery | 32km long easy run incl. 3 x 20 minutes @ target MP (10 minutes jog recovery in between) | Rest & Recovery or 60 minutes cross-training |
| <b>14</b><br>W/C<br>7th<br>APR  | 20 minutes easy run + Surges 20 minutes (5 Blocks) 3 minutes @ 6/10 effort 1 min @ 8/10 effort (not a sprint)    | Rest & Recovery or 60 minutes cross-training | Rest & Recovery | 35 minutes using Hills = 15 minutes easy pace, 10 x 1 minute @ 7/10 uphill effort with jog back down recovery, 10 minutes easy pace | Rest & Recovery | 32km progression run 10km @ easy 10km @ steady 12km @ target MP                          | Rest & Recovery or 60 minutes cross-training |

## PHASE FOUR TAPER

| WEEK                            | MON   | TUE                 | WED             | THUR   | FRI             | SAT   | SUN                                 |
|---------------------------------|---|---------------------|-----------------|--|-----------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| <b>15</b><br>W/C<br>14th<br>APR | 30 minutes easy run + 5 x 4 minutes at 8/10 effort with 90s jog recovery (after each 4 minutes run) | 45 minutes easy run | Rest & Recovery | 60 minutes tempo progression: 30 minutes easy pace, 30 minutes @ target MP | Rest & Recovery | 70 minutes easy run incl 30 minutes steady + final 20 minutes @ target MP | Rest & Recovery                     |
| <b>16</b><br>W/C<br>21st<br>APR | 30 minutes easy run + 3 x 5 minutes at 8/10 effort with 90s jog recovery (after each 5 minutes run) | 45 minutes easy run | Rest & Recovery | 30 minutes easy including 5 minutes @ target MP                            | Rest & Recovery | 30 minutes easy run   | <b>RACE DAY</b><br><b>GOOD LUCK</b> |